

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 06494 151458Z

17

ACTION HEW-06

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 IO-10 ISO-00 INR-07 MED-03 NSAE-00

PA-02 OES-05 USIA-15 PRS-01 CIAE-00 AID-05 DODE-00

/064 W

----- 036122

R 150900Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8694

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

UNCLAS NEW DELHI 6494

DEPT PASS DHEW/PHS

U.S. MISSION GENEVA- PASS DR. PAUL EHRLICH

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TBIO, IN

SUBJECT: RESURCENCE OF MALARIA IN INDIA

1. THE INEIDENCE OF MALARIA IN INDIA IS ON THE INCREASE AND FUNDS FOR THE GOVERNMENT'S ANTI MALARIA PROGRAM HAVE BEEN SEVERELY REDUCED.

2. THE BUDGET FOR THE INDIAN ANTI MALARIA PROGRAM FOR FY 1975-76 WAS RS 230 MILLION, WHERE THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH ESTIMATES RS 650 MILLION IS REQUIRED FOR AN EFFECTIVE CONTROL PROGRAM AND AT LEAST RS 450 MILLION FOR A PLAN OF SELECTIVE CONTROL.

3. THESE FINANCIAL CONSTRAINS, CLAIMS MINISTRY OF HEALTH OFFICIALS HAVE PREVENTED THE KOH FROM ALLOCATING FULL RESOURCES TO THE NATIONAL MALARIA ERADICATION PROGRAM WHICH HAD REDUCED ANNUAL ATTACKS OF MALARIA TO 100,000 AND NO DEATHS IN 1965 FROM 7.5 MILLION CASES AND 800,000 ANNUAL DEATHS IN 1953 AT THE CREATION OF THE PROGRAM.

4. THE INCIDENCE OF MALARIA REACHED 2.5 MILLION (REPORTED CASES, PROBABLY MANY MORE UNREPORTED) IN 1974, WITH AN UNDETER-. MINED NUMBER OF DIRECTLY RELATED DEATHS. FROM CURRENT WHO REPORTS MALARIA WILL SHWO A SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE AGAIN THIS YEAR. THE MAJOR UNCLASSIFIED

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REASON GIVEN BY MOH OFFICIALS FOR THIS RESURGENCE OF MALARIA IS THE

LETHARGIC STATE PROGRAMS WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY IT IS TO KEEP AN ALERT SURVEILLANCE AND CONTINUOUS MAINTENANCE. IN ADDITION, THE CENTRAL PROGRAM IS SUFFERING FROM A SHORTAGE OF ANTI MALARIA DRUGS BECAUSE OF A WORLD-WIDE SHORTAGE OF CHLOROQUINE LAST YEAR AND THE INDIANS PRODUCE ONLY A SMALL AMOUNT OF THE REQUIREMENT. DDT IS STILL THE MAIN INSECTICIDE USED FOR SPRAYING IN THE MALARIA PROGRAM, HOWEVER, SOME RESISTANCE TO DDT HAS BEEN DEVELOPED IN THE ANOPHELES MOSQUITOES ALSO, DDT HAS BEEN SCARCE WITH INDIA PRODUCING 5,600 TONNES A YEAR WHEN 20,460 TONNES ARE NEEDED FOR AN ADEQUATE COVERAGE. MOST OF INDIA'S IMPORTS ARE NOW COMING FROM THE USSR AND THEY ARE PAYING ABOUT DOLS 26 MILLION ANNUALLY FOR DDT.

5. A HIGH LEVEL MALARIA COMMITTEE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH HAS SUGGESTED A NEW APPROACH FOR THE NATIONAL MALARIA ERADICATION PROGRAM BASED ON CLASSIFICATION OF DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE COUNTRY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE INCIDENCE OF MALARIA. HEEDING THE ADVICE OF THIS COMMITTEE, THE MOH IS DEVELOPING A COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM FOR SELECTIVE CONTROL OF MALARIA. MANY FEEL THESE NEW PROCEDURES ARE TAKING PLACE DUE TO THE PRESSURE FROM THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION AND THE INDIAN PRESS THAT HAVE LISTED INDIA AMONG THE MOST BACKWARD COUNTRIES IN RELATION TO THE INCIDENCE OF MALARIA.

6. THE MALARIA CONTROVERCY HAS AGAIN BROUGHT THE WHO MOSQUITOE GENETIC RESEARCH PROJECT TO THE FOREFRONT OF OFFICIAL THINKING. THE MOH AND EVEN THE PARLIAMENT ARE TAKING A VERY HARD LOOK AT THIS PROJECT AGAIN FROM THE STANDPOINT THAT THIS COULD EVENTUALLY BE THE ONLY SOLUTION TO A GROWING AND EMBARRASSING HEALTH PROBLEM. TO STOP WORK IN THIS FIELD NOW WOULD BE WASTING 5 YEARS OF VALUABLE RESEARCH AND A CHANCE TO OBTAIN SOME MEANINGFUL RESULTS IN 2 OR 3 YEARS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MALARIA
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975NEWDE06494
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750171-0824
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750549/aaaabsfo.tel
Line Count: 93
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION HEW
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 JUL 2003 by BalzMJ>; APPROVED <09 FEB 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RESURCENCE OF MALARIA IN INDIA
TAGS: TBIO, IN
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006